KION Group continues to expand its footprint in Eastern Europe

- Greater direct access to the Russian market
- Leading position in Eastern Europe strengthened
- Strategic focus on fast-growing markets

Wiesbaden, 5 September 2011 – The KION Group is continuing to expand its footprint in Eastern Europe. As part of this, the KION Group brand Linde Material Handling is acquiring the business of the dealer Liftec in Russia. For around 20 years now, Linde has worked successfully with Liftec in Russia. The takeover gives the Linde brand greater direct access to the high-growth potential of the Russian market. This will give Linde its own sales and service structure in Russia, like that already established for the STILL brand.

With more than 12,000 new trucks sold in the first six months of 2011, Russia is now the fifth-largest market for industrial trucks in Europe. Demand has doubled compared to the same period in 2010 on the back of Russia's strong overall economic growth. Linde is also stepping up its activities in Ukraine and Kazakhstan, taking over the operations of two other Liftec divisions. Liftec currently employs around 180 highly qualified staff in these regions. The transaction will be implemented as soon as approval is granted by the antitrust authorities.

"This transaction will help us to further expand our direct sales and service organisation in Russia, thereby strengthening our leading position in Eastern Europe", says Gordon Riske, CEO of the KION Group. "We anticipate sustained rapid growth in the markets in places such as Brazil, India and China. To take advantage of this, we aim to continually expand our presence in the BRIC countries and to expand both our existing sales and service network and our local production capacities in these fast-growing regions."

Strongly positioned in the global growth markets

In Brazil, the KION Group is currently expanding its production capacities in order to better satisfy growing customer demand. In São Paulo, KION is setting up a plant to manufacture IC trucks. Production in São Paulo is scheduled to start in early 2012. The existing Brazilian plant in Rio de Janeiro manufactures warehouse technology for KION’s STILL and Linde brands.
In India, the KION Group and Voltas Limited have set up Voltas Material Handling Private Ltd. (VMH). The KION Group holds the majority of shares in this joint venture for the development, manufacture, sale and service of forklift trucks and warehouse technology. In July, Voltas Material Handling commenced operations at a new plant in Pune, with the aim of better exploiting the potential offered by the growing Indian market.

The Linde brand has been active in China for almost two decades. Its nationwide sales and service network makes it the biggest international distributor in what is now the world's second-biggest market after western Europe. The Linde plant in Xiamen has been producing trucks, mainly for the Chinese market, for more than 15 years. It is the third-biggest plant in the KION Group after those in Aschaffenburg and Hamburg. The Chinese brand Baoli focuses on the economy segment in the target growth markets of China, Eastern Europe and Central and South America. In terms of the number of units sold, Jingjiang-based Baoli ranks among the top ten Chinese brands in the industry.

The Company
With its six brands – Linde, STILL, Fenwick, OM, Baoli and Voltas – the KION Group is Europe’s market leader for industrial trucks, the global number two in the industry and the leading international supplier in China. The KION Group employed over 20,000 people and generated revenue more than €3.5 billion in the 2010 financial year. Linde Material Handling GmbH, based in Aschaffenburg, is one of the world’s leading manufacturers of industrial trucks and one of the key producers of hydrostatic and electrical drive systems, which are used in its own trucks, as well as in construction, agricultural and forestry machinery. Linde Material Handling currently employs a global workforce of more than 12,000 employees. In 2010 it generated annual revenue of around €2.3 billion.

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For further information please contact
Michael Hauger
Head of Communications and Investor Relations
Tel.: +49 (0)611.770-655
Email: michael.hauger@kiongroup.com

Detlef Sieverdingbeck
Head of Communications, Linde Material Handling
Tel.: +49 (0)6021.99-1407
Email: detlef.sieverdingbeck@linde-mh.de